Failsafe cross-locational backup and recovery

Postbank Systems AG opts for CentricStor virtual tape solution

Postbank

» The CentricStor concept completely convinced us. In particular, the high level of scalability and openness for all systems at both the frontend and backend represent major advantages. «

Oliver Heuser, Platform Manager for Databases and Storage, Postbank Systems AG

→ The challenge

Optimization of backup and recovery – integration of tape virtualization to make better use of the capacity of existing tape libraries and to achieve a significant reduction in the time required for data backup
Self-contained functionality – tape virtualization independent of server hardware and applications
Cross-locational deployment – redundant data storage with recovery over long distances
Future-safe – open technology solution with flexible scalability

→ The solution

Postbank Systems AG used the **CentricStor virtual tape solution** to reorganize mainframe backup and recovery in 2003 and then its open-systems environment in 2006. Five CentricStor Virtual Tape Appliances – one of which at the Frankfurt data center with a connection to the Bonn data center for disaster recovery – are currently in operation. This total solution has enabled Postbank Systems AG to keep up with the constant increase in the volume of its data. At the same time, this made it possible to protect the company's investment in tape libraries and to implement a uniform backup and recovery solution for all systems. This achieves not only optimal use of storage capacity, but also exceptional economy, flexibility and performance. Tangible improvements resulted in the form of shorter backup times and a significant reduction in the number of physical tape libraries, drives and media.

With more than 14.6 million customers, approximately 22,000 employees and total assets in the amount of €190 billion, the **Postbank Group** ranks among Germany's largest private customer banks. As wholly owned Postbank subsidiary, **Postbank Systems AG** is responsible for the planning, development, implementation and control of the operation of all of the Postbank Group' information technology resources. More at: **www.postbank.de**

→ The project

Postbank Systems AG deployed CentricStor in 2003 in order to make better use of the capacity of existing tape libraries and ward off the threat of capacity shortfalls. The virtual tape solution offers fully integrated disk-to-disk-to-tape data protection. The data to be backed up are first stored in the CentricStor disk cache and then automatically migrated to the connected tape libraries. Volume stacking makes it possible to use physical media to full capacity. Postbank Systems AG used this approach for its BS2000/OSD systems, extended the concept to its IBM z/OS mainframe environment and then fine-tuned it with the help of cache mirror and automatic failover to create a failsafe solution located in various fire protection zones. Due to the positive experience with CentricStor in its heterogeneous mainframe environment, the customer decided in 2006 to extend the solution for its open system world with AIX, HP-UX, Windows NT, Novell and Linux servers as well. This was done by linking the clients of the TSM (Tivoli Storage Management) strategic storage management environment to virtual tape drives. The Bonn data center of Postbank Systems AG currently employs four CentricStor systems. They are distributed over various security cells and feature fail-safe configuration with CentricStor Grid Architecture. Postbank Systems AG connects now far away located tape libraries and drives to the solution. Redundant data storage for the Frankfurt data center was implemented at the Bonn data center for this purpose. One of the customer's stipulations was that it be possible to handle the expected daily backup volume of 30 uncompressed terabytes within a time frame of 12 hours. In cooperation with Brocade, two DWDM (Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing) connections were established and a data throughput of 30 Mbps achieved at the tape drive by using special technology.

→ A record of success

Postbank Systems AG has used CentricStor to take full advantage of available potential for improvement in backup and recovery. This IT service provider now has an extremely flexible, failsafe total cross-system and cross-locational solution. The use of tape capacity was significantly improved and the number of physical tape libraries and drives reduced. At the same time, data backup times were drastically shortened. Since CentricStor features open technology at both the front end and the back end, Postbank Systems AG also has a future-safe solution that is completely flexible, for example, with respect to future interfaces and formats for tape processing. Plans already exist to deploy the next CentricStor generation.

→ Contact